

**Trinity Methodist Church,
Cradley**



**Sunday School
Souvenir Booklet**

TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH
CRADLEY

1815-1965

Sunday School Souvenir
Booklet



The Church and Chapel House

June, 1965.

Dear Friend,

This year Trinity Sunday School passes a milestone—a memorable one—for it is now 140 years old.

The Teachers and Staff felt that this should be commemorated in some way and have chosen to publish a souvenir booklet.

Deciding what to put in and leave out has not been easy, but we feel the book will serve its purpose well—a reminder to you of what Trinity—and, before that, Cradley Wesleyan School—has meant to you.

Please accept this copy then with our compliments.

Now may we invite you to contribute to the Thanksgiving Appeal which has been launched simultaneously with the publication of this Book. Feeling sure that you will have much to be thankful for, that our School has meant much to you over the years, we feel certain our appeal for your support will be met with generosity. Any one of the under-mentioned will be pleased to receive your gift and accordingly offer you their thanks in advance.

Sincerely yours,

E. WRIGHT (Minister),
Wesley Manse,
Drews Holloway,
Cradley, Staffs.

R. J. DEELEY (Superintendent),
“Holbeech”,
Beecher Road,
Cradley, Staffs.

J. H. WORTON (Treasurer),
41, Banner Street,
Cradley, Staffs.

SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTER

To summarise the influence of these past 140 years, to count the men and women who have served the Lord Jesus Christ with devotion and sacrifice would be an impossible task; it would be yet more difficult to attempt any assessment of the results of their labours upon the population of the district. That the influence has been exerted, the leadership given, is surely undisputed. Today we offer God our thanks and praise for all that we can recall of time spent in Trinity School, of friendships cherished over the years.

Whilst much satisfaction and pleasure may be obtained from basking in one's memories, it is now necessary to think seriously of the future. Our concern, our calling, is to lead children and young people in the way of Christ.

It is probably true to say that this is far more difficult a task now than at any time in our history. Conditions, times, fashions, all these have changed—the span of the life of our school has witnessed the coming of the first motor car, radio and the flight of man into space. Who knows, in a decade man may be on the moon. But in spite of this progress, the Eternal Truth remains. Jesus is the Truth, the Light, and the Way. The lessons of life still have to be taught.

As we now thank God for that which is past, may we invite your support in the future? We aim to put one of these books into the hands of all known scholars and friends with an urgent invitation to come and join us. A warm welcome awaits old friends and new ones.

The future of Trinity depends upon your response to this appeal.

JACK DEELEY.

The Sunday School Teachers felt that the oldest surviving ex-Official be invited to contribute to this publication. Remembering the many years' service rendered by Mr. A. J. Twigg, we are now pleased to reproduce his memories.

One of the earliest of my childhood recollections (1874) is of the old Wesleyan School which at that time was both a day school, under Mr. Jackson and Mr. N. Yeoman, and a Sunday School under the Cradley Wesleyan Society. I well remember a tall pole swing at the rear of the old Church for the recreation and exercise of the scholars. Shortly afterwards the day scholars were removed to High Town Ragged School. Later they were taken to Cradley Heath.

The old building had a gallery at the end nearest the Church and a large classroom below where the school library was situated and where the Young Men's Class was held for Sunday lessons, afterwards joining the main school above.

On the gallery was a large chest ornamented with the letters I.O.G.T.—Independent Order of Good Templars.

Temperance work was prosperous in those times while some years later the Band of Hope had a constable as Superintendent.

In 1865 the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society was formed and soon had its own library of standard books of science and fiction. A leading figure in the Society was Mr. Tom Crampton, a brother of the later well-known George and John. The Society proved a valuable aid to its members with debates, essays, book reviews and other activities. Nearly eighty years ago I myself became a member of the class. On one occasion, Mr. Brooks, a local chemist and a member of the class, gave a lecture on electricity, after which he was asked by a member if it

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was not a fact that a specially prepared match was required to light the electric lamp. Mr. Brooks considerably corrected the questioner, who happened to be his own brother-in-law.

Mr. G. Taylor was the first Superintendent I knew with a full staff of devoted teachers among whom was my own teacher, Mr. H. Case, who told us that if God intended a man to smoke He would have provided him with a chimney on his head. In later years a school choir of boys was formed by Mr. H. Bloomer and lasted for some time and was much appreciated.

The closing of Corngreaves Iron Works caused a great deal of suffering in the district for no "Out of Work" pay was coming into the home, and so a free Christmas breakfast was provided for a considerable number of children.

The Sunday School Anniversary was the highlight of the year, for a prominent preacher was engaged. No less than five Presidents of the Conference were secured during their period of office.

The Rev. W. C. Watkinson will be long remembered. He was one of the tallest of men and very near-sighted, and on entering the pulpit he lifted up the pulpit hassock and placed it on the reading desk. Among other activities by the scholars was the Christmas Carol Singing for missionary work and other funds. Tract distribution was regularly carried out from house to house.

In more recent times the Wesley Guild did good work, largely supported by Mr. H. Clift.

Thrifty habits were encouraged by the Clothing Club, so long and ably carried on by Mr. P. Case, and a Savings Committee was formed for the sale of Government securities.

In the days of its prosperity the scholars of the school filled the body of the school and overflowed into the

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gallery, one end being filled by the Young Women's Class under Mrs. J. Darby and the other with the Young Men's class under Mr. Chapman.

The church, too, was well attended so that it was sometimes difficult to provide sittings for those who required to rent them.

But soon war clouds gathered and many scholars and people were scattered. No less than twenty-five of our young men were called to the forces of the Crown and of these ten made the great sacrifice.

JOHN TWIGG.

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In 1766 the first Wesleyan Methodist Society was formed in Cradley, which was then in the "Staffordshire" Circuit.

In 1768 the first Wesleyan Chapel, thirty feet long by twenty broad was built in Butcher's Lane.

John Wesley preached in Cradley on March 19th, 1770.

In 1796, Wesleyans bought the old Cradley Forge Chapel from the Presbyterians, who had built a new Chapel at Park Lane.

In 1839 The Manse (present Chapel House) was built.

The present Chapel was built in 1874 and opened on June 8th, at a cost of £2,928 16s. 10d.



The School

Professional calls took Mr. C. E. Clift from Cradley to Wolverhampton in the 1920's. We publish now his reminiscences.

"Do this in remembrance of Me" is a command of our Lord which forms part of a prayer in our service of Holy Communion, and as our Master asked us to remember Him, so must I recall to remembrance the great and wonderful experiences which have been mine at Cradley Trinity Church and Sunday School.

My memory goes back to when my parents brought me into the great family of Christian men and women at Trinity, who laboured so assiduously for The Kingdom. Even as a child I felt I had a place. Friendship was given naturally and spontaneously and such was its warmth that its worth has continued with me during the years. It would be difficult to name all those whose guidance and help surrounded me and so many others, during those teenage days. I think, however, of such names as Adam Brazier, James Ashton and Henry Clift (my grandfather) and I must express my gratitude for the way they influenced me in my search for Christ and His Kingdom. It was this early nurturing which eventually led me to become a Sunday School Teacher in 1909 and in later years to follow my father and grandfather as Sunday School Superintendent. Those days of teaching I feel were some of the most important and valuable in my life, for there were times of testing, of leadership and comradeship with those whom I was privileged to have in my Sunday School and Society Class. I am sure there are some who will remember Drews Holloway. How we did sing and disturb the neighbours, but those were the days when we were seeking the Truth. In doing so we discussed so many subjects—often controversial—but always in a spirit of love and friendship. Cradley Trinity had much to give us then in fellowship, in faith and in trust, and I am sure the foundations of our Christian Faith were truly laid as we met together. This

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rich fellowship found its place also in our recreations, and many will have happy memories of our football club matches, of our excursions to Llangollen and other places, and for some of us, our camping week-ends on the banks of the Severn at Stourport.

One calls to memory the great influence the Rev. J. A. Asquith Baker (1912-1914) had upon us. His great interest in and service for young people can surely be recalled, for he met so many of us on "Saturday nights" in the Manse, Lyde Green. He certainly gave us much encouragement and help and his service to Trinity was immense.

Cradley Trinity had the honour of having as its Minister (Rev. J. T. East) the composer of the Hymn:

"Wise Men seeking Jesus" (M.H.B. 862)

and this hymn was first sung at the Sunday School Anniversary in 1909 and we rejoice that many other Sunday Schools and Churches have found it, and still find it a most helpful hymn to children and adults alike.

My concluding word must be of real thanks and appreciation for the many joys and blessings which have been mine through the influences for good which emanated from Cradley Trinity. As progress and change come upon us, let us say with many others who have shared in the 140 years of Sunday School work at Trinity—

*"We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."*

(Jos. Hart—M.H.B. 69.)

CLARRY CLIFT.

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The Sunday School Anniversary collections in 1892 set up a new record—£27. Our highest record to date is £246 . 0 . 0 in 1965.



Present Scholars

MINISTER'S LETTER

Sunday School work is difficult these days. Many parents send their children but themselves seldom enter a place of worship. Many children leave Sunday School at the age of 14 or so and fail to be absorbed into the life of the Church. Yet we must never forget that a Sunday School is part of the Church, and if the youngsters who pass through our Sunday Schools fail to enter into the life of the Church, then the future of the Church is bleak indeed.

I therefore commend the work of Trinity Sunday School to all who read this Souvenir Booklet. Those who teach there are dedicated to their task and intensely interested in children whom they have in their care. This interest springs out of their own Christian experience, which they received in diverse ways, but in which their own experiences as Sunday School scholars played no little part.

They are endeavouring to pass on to the children they teach something of their own Christian experience—experience tinged with knowledge, acquired in the hard school of life. They—and I—wish to see Trinity Sunday School grow in strength, and as the School is part of the Church, we all wish to see Trinity Church grow stronger also. So it is my earnest hope that you will all endeavour to support your Sunday School in the days which lie ahead—in all possible ways.

All work done for children is worthwhile. And work which helps children to grow up as Christians is doubly worthwhile. These are difficult days for those of us who profess the Christian faith. But Trinity Sunday School and all it stands for is a sign that difficulties are meant to be overcome.

ERIC WRIGHT.

In more recent years the Sunday School has actively participated in the Annual Scripture Examination and is proud of its achievements.

The Woodhouse Challenge Shield was won in the years:

1947	1948	1949
1950	1953	1955
1956	1964	

We were runners-up and received the Shaw Cup in:

1951	1952	1962	1965
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In 1824 Friends of the then Wesleyan Society in Cradley purchased an old nail warehouse in Butcher's Lane, the ground floor of which was used as a school to teach adults to read and write, the upstairs room being used as a Sunday School.

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During the years 1865-1925 ten Cradley Scholars entered the Ministry and that five of our lady Teachers became Ministers' wives.



Present Staff

SUPERINTENDENTS AND SECRETARIES

SUPERINTENDENTS

1850 — 1851	...	Joseph Adams
1852 — 1855	...	Thomas Crowther
1856 — 1866	...	David Brooks
1867 — 1868	...	Stephen Dunn
1869 — 1874	...	George Taylor
1875 — 1877	...	Henry Clift
1878 — 1883	...	George Taylor
1884 — 1886	...	Henry Clift
1887 — 1897	...	Joseph Bloomer
1898 — 1902	...	George Taylor
1903 — 1909	...	John H. Griffiths
1910 — 1913	...	Samuel Clift
1914 — 1915	...	William E. Warr
1916 — 1922	...	Arthur J. Twigg
1923	...	David M. Chapman
1924 — 1925	...	Joseph Smith
1926 — 1927	...	Clarence Clift
1927 — 1930	...	Cyril Head
1930 — 1940	...	Joseph Smith
1940 — 1941	...	Cyril Head
1942 — 1955	...	Joseph H. Worton
1956 — 1965	...	Jack Deeley

SECRETARIES

1850 — 1851	...	Joseph Thompson
1852 — 1866	...	William Downing
1867 — 1899	...	William Brazier
1900 — 1902	...	John H. Griffiths
1903 — 1926	...	Alfred Wooldridge

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1927 — 1929	...	Ralph Twigg
1930 — 1935	...	Alfred W. Worton
1936 — 1940	...	Thomas W. Porter
1940 — 1941	...	Leonard Lawley
1941 — 1942	...	Joseph Timmins
1942 — 1945	...	Harry Richardson
1945 — 1946	...	Thomas Reece
1946 — 1949	...	Arthur Holyoake
1949 — 1950	...	Gerald Barber
1951 — 1963	...	Harry Richardson
1964	...	Maureen Robins
1965	...	Cynthia Hemming

The first Sunday School Anniversary was held in 1825, the Evening Service being held in the Baptist Church loaned by the Friends for that occasion. In about 1840 the first Wesleyan Sunday School was built, being rebuilt in 1884.

Methodist union in 1932 brought the change in name to Cradley Trinity—yet how hard tradition dies—so many register uncertainly even today until reassured the reference is to “The ex-Wesleyan”.

Every care has been taken in carrying out the necessary research to enable this Handbook to be published.

The School Council acknowledges with thanks the contributions from A. J. Twigg, C. E. Clift and the Rev. E. Wright and R. Bills (photography).